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MONTANA TRAVEL NEWS

TRAVEL PROMOTION UNIT, DEPT. OF HIGHWAYS, HELENA, MONTANA 59601 - VOL. 2, NO. 3, 1975

MONTANA TRAVEL SHOWS BIG INCREASE

"MTH" INITIATES TRAVEL CAMPAIGN

A major effort to keep vacationers interested in Montana as a total vacation destination instead of a "pass-through" to points in other states has been initiated by the Montana Travel Hosts, a division of the Montana Chamber of Commerce.

According to Stan Hanson, director of MTH, 100 racks containing brochures on Montana "Mini-Tours," trips within a day's travel of major Montana points, have been placed around the state at strategic locations. A total of 250 racks will be in use by the end of 1975, Hanson said.

For brochure purposes, the state was divided into six sections and individual brochures emphasize travel attractions in each section.

Racks have been distributed to Montana Points of Entry, local Chambers of Commerce, service stations, car rental agencies, museums, campgrounds, restaurants and other typical stops for car travelers, Hanson said.

In addition to the informational brochures, seven of the old Montana Centennial railroad cars decorated in red, white and blue have been leased from the state and placed at points of entry.

The brochure campaign is sponsored by the Montana Travel Hosts in association with the Montana Travel Promotion Unit.

Reports of visitor attendance at representative Montana travel attractions indicate that travel is up considerably from 1974, bearing out earlier predictions that 1975 would be a banner year for travel in the Big Sky state in spite of economic fluctuations in the gas price scene.

The single most dramatic increase in travel figures was reported by the Custer Battlefield National Monument where the visitor total for the period of July 1 through July 13 was 33,876 — up from 18,287 for the same period in 1974 and nearly double the 1974 figure.

Glacier National Park has reported 342,671 visitor entrances into the Park through June of this year, up nine percent from the 308,100 through June of 1974. The substantial increase was a surprise to park officials in view of the delayed status of some park roads during the late season bad weather that plagued most of Montana with heavy rain and mud slides.

Yellowstone National Park, with three of its five entrances in Montana, reported an 18 percent increase through July 10 — 791,917 visitors as opposed to 666,918 through July 10 of 1974 — representing an additional 124,999 vacationers over the 1974 total.

For the period May 1 through July 8, 1975, Lewis and Clark Caverns reported 23,858 visitors — up 1,843 from the 22,015 reported for the same period in 1974.

In Helena, the Montana Historical Society, always a good barometer of

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Montana to be Featured On TODAY Show in August

A salute to Montana is scheduled for airing on the *Today Show* August 15, as part of a National Broadcasting Company special programming effort planned in conjunction with the Bicentennial celebration.

The salute to Montana will include a film story on a cattle ranch in Montana, an interview with Congressman John Melcher of Billings, and a panel on Montana Indians composed of tribal leaders as well as representatives of Indian oriented organizations.

Also scheduled for the Montana program is a film story on strip mining, tours of Charles Russell art at the Great Falls and Helena Russell galleries, and a historic segment on the state written by Lois McBride, Montana author and writer of travel publicity for the Montana Travel Promotion Unit.

Preliminary filming for the Salute to Montana was completed last month in Great Falls and in Helena, with remaining programming to be completed in Great Falls August 13. The program is scheduled to originate in Great Falls, with Jim Hartes hosting the two-hour Montana program for the *Today Show*.

The Travel Promotion Unit has worked extensively with the *Today* organization, arranging for historic photographs and background information for the program.

NBC has broadcast salutes to one of the 50 states each Friday since July 4, with a purpose of "defining the attitudes and behavior of Americans today" to seek a "deeper understanding and appreciation of what makes this nation what it is."

POSITIVE RESULTS FOR MTN SURVEY

A recent questionaire surveying reactions to Montana Travel News has been "highly rewarding," according to Josephine Brooker, Director of the Montana Travel Promotion Unit.

"80 per cent of the responses were favorable," Ms. Brooker said, "and results of the questionaire are being carefully studied to determine future directions the publication may take."

TRAVEL AGENTS FAM TOUR

A group of 23 travel agents from midwest cities toured travel offerings at Great Falls, Glacier National Park, Kalispell, Big Sky and Virginia City recently on a four-day travel agent familiarization tour sponsored by the Montana Travel Promotion Unit in cooperation with Frontier Airlines.

Agents from such Montana market area cities as Lincoln, Omaha and St. Louis were invited to participate in the tour in an effort to emphasize Montana as a vacation destination.

According to Mrs. Pat Downs, Coordinator of the Tours Division of Montana Travel Promotion Unit, in charge of planning the familiarization tours, the emphasis is to "sell the salesmen — the agents who book trips for travelers — on Montana so they will in turn sell Montana to their clients."

According to Downs, the first tour was so successful that a second tour following a similar itinerary is being planned for early in September.

PRESS GROUP VISITS MONTANA

MONTANA HOSTED a group of professional press photographers late in June on a post-convention tour following the National Press Photographers' Association convention at Jackson Lake, Wyoming. Following visits to Flathead Lake and Kalispell, 12 photographers representing newspapers from various regions of the United States toured Glacier National Park in a Glacier Park Co. White touring bus, photographing wildlife along the road and the Park's splendid scenery.

Double Decker Is Eye Opener

Drivers on Great Falls' city streets are delighted but no longer startled as well when they look up and see a genuine London bus tootling through traffic.

Everybody knows by now that it really is a London bus, but it didn't somehow hang a left across the Atlantic to get lost in the wilds of Great Falls. It's just Al Donohue's London bus, and it operates out of the Heritage Inn.

21 years old and with uncountable miles under its wheels, the bus was shipped from London first to Long Beach, Calif. before purchase by the Heritage Inn and is the "one and only London bus in Montana," according to Donohue.

The bus weighs around 14,000 pounds and carries 56 people — all

of them boarding on the left side with the driver on the right, in keeping with English tradition and in direct opposition to U.S. road traditions that put the driver on the left. Powered by a diesel engine, the bus travels as fast as 40 miles per hour and is, with its double-decker seating, 14'2" high—a fact that makes drivers nervous about railroad overpasses and low bridges.

Sometimes used as a contest incentive in local fund-raising programs and often chartered to convention groups, the bus is used primarily as a "happy form of advertising" for Heritage Inn.

"The bus is unique and everybody's happy when they see it," Donohue said, "and we even get peace signs from hippie-types."

Donohue added, "I really don't know who gets the most fun out of the London bus — passengers, passers-by, or the driver!"

REDBOOK AWARD SALUTES STATE

JOSEPHINE BROOKER, Director of the Montana Travel Promotion Unit, and Frank Holub, Art Director of Sage Advertising, Helena, display the handsome REDBOOK trophy awarded to Montana for "excellence in creative advertising." One of only three such awards made by REDBOOK magazine for 1975, the recognition trophy was based on unusual photo and layout effects designed by Holub for a State travel promotion effort. The award was presented to Ms. Brooker at a Discover America Travel Organization (DATO) Pow Wow in New Orleans.

GREAT FALLS OPENS NEW AIR TERMINAL

AIR TRAVELERS find Great Falls International Airport a first class operation with new, expanded facilities in daily use since dedication ceremonies held earlier this summer.

A new terminal building at Great Falls International Airport has been in operation since dedication ceremonies last month, providing expanded air service for Montana travelers.

The new facility, under construction since 1973, provides a restaurant and lounge, several waiting areas, a variety of shops, an air cargo section, airport administration offices, and enlarged customs and immigration facilities. In addition to the 116,000-square-foot structure, additional airport parking provides 531 spaces, planned for ultimate expansion to 1,106 vehicles.

The airport is served by Western Airlines, Northwest Airlines, Hughes Airwest and Frontier Airlines, with an average of 20 departures daily and annual boardings of nearly 125,000.

With the new terminal in operation, Northwest Airlines has announced DC-10 service both east and west. The airport has the longest runway between Minneapolis and Seattle, which at 10,500 feet is capable of handling any size aircraft.

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AAA REPORTS ON MONTANA TRAVEL

Travel, bringing in $242 million a year, is Montana's third largest industry, according to a recent study by the American Automobile Association.

According to the study, published in June in the Missoula Chamber of Commerce newsletter, a total of 29,200 persons in Montana earn all or a portion of their income from the travel industry, including automotive dealers and service stations, eating and drinking establishments, lodging facilities, and personal services including janitorial and housemaid employment.

The study estimated that 27 cents of every travel dollar goes for lodging, 25 cents for food, 24 cents for gas and oil, 10 cents for entertainment, and 14 cents for purchases and miscellaneous expenditures.

According to the AAA study, agriculture remains Montana's largest industry, with a value of $1 billion, and travel is crowding minerals production, which brings $362 million to the state, for the number two spot in the state's industries.

THE LARGEST WAGON TRAIN assembled in one place since the originals crossed the prairies a century ago kicked off festivities for the 52nd Annual Wolf Point Wild Horse Stampede for 1975. Starting in Scobey, 60 wagons had joined the train by the time it completed the 75-mile trek to Wolf Point. Montie Montana, celebrating his 50 years in show business as a top rodeo and trick roping star by returning to his home town for the stampede, drove his 100-year-old stagecoach during part of the wagon train trek and was featured with a unique Belgian six-horse hitch.

STUDY RATES TRAVEL TYPES

Studies of different types of vacationers have revealed varying degrees of environmental and social costs, according to reports from Maine and Maryland.

The studies rated the social and environmental impact of various types of tourists, measuring them by various cost criteria and comparing the total against the vacationers' average per day expenditure.

According to the study, conventioneers and business visitors cost least in terms of environmental and social damage and also spent the most money per tourist per day. Next in terms of value were skiers, with sightseers, snowmobilers and campers following in that order.

The Maryland study also indicated that visitors who stay in hotels or motels not only spent four times as much as campers but also generated six times more jobs, seven times more income, and over five times as much tax revenue.

MONTANA TRAVEL NEWSLETTER
published as a report on Montana's Tourist Industry by
The Travel Promotion Unit, Department of Highways

Montie Montana Honored at Stampede

Montie Montana, veteran western star and trick rope artist, celebrated his 50th anniversary in show business during the Wolf Point Wild Horse Stampede. A native of Wolf Point, Montana returned to his home town for his Golden Anniversary as a western performer and drove a 100 year old stage coach during the 85-mile wagon trek preceeding the stampede celebration.

Governor Thomas L. Judge proclaimed July 10-13 as Montie Montana Days, and the annual Wolf Point stampede was dedicated to the veteran western star.

Federal Program Promotes Travel

Appropriations totaling $8,125,000 were authorized July 9 when President Ford signed into law S. 2003, the United States Travel Service Authorization Act, which reinstated a domestic tourism program.

The bill had been vetoed earlier, and was reworked into compromise legislation providing support for domestic tourism programs "which are in the public interest and which do not compete with activities of any state, city, or private agency."

The domestic tourism program, designed to encourage Americans to travel in the U.S., is accompanied by a provision in the act that authorizes appropriations totaling $90 million for promotion of international travel to the U.S.

The domestic travel appropriations are for the period from July 1, 1975 to September 30, 1978, while the international tourism appropriations cover the period from July 1, 1976 to September 20, 1979.

MOVIE PRODUCTIONS ACTIVE IN STATE

Recent efforts by Montana to attract movie production could be the start of a great industry, says Pat Mathews, Montana Film Locations Coordinator in Los Angeles. "It doesn't pollute, it doesn't mar the state in any way. They come in, shoot their pictures, and get out. All they leave behind is money."

It's strictly a matter of economic development, says Mathews, who estimates that movie making could bring in $5 million in new money to Montana this year.

Mathews was in Helena with director John Demme who is "99 per cent" sold on shooting a major movie in Boulder.

Boulder would become the town of Tropicana in the film *Fighting Mad,*" with filming due to start in late August or early September. Stars being talked about include Henry and Peter Fonda and Rod Taylor. Scenes would also be shot around Helena, Butte, and Flathead Lake, with a modern-day setting.

Another interesting movie that MGM will be filming in Montana is "*Wild Track,*" a "real adventure, action thing" where a freight train used to transfer a federal prisoner is hijacked. It looks like Charlton Heston might be the star, and Al Pacino might play the bad guy, says Mathews. Billings may be the location for the filming.

JOHN QUIGLEY, developer of Frontier Town near Helena, leads a charge of 1850-style U.S. Army dragoons on McDonald Pass in a sequence for POTATO FRITZ, a western being filmed by a West German film company. The mobile crew filmed in the Helena area for a week. Decisions have not yet been finalized to complete the fiim in Montana or on location in Spain.

All of the movies that have been made in Montana in the last couple of years have been promoted.

For instance, Mathews says, he worked for 16 months to get "*Missouri Breaks*" into Montana, competing along the way with Alberta and New Mexico. "*Missouri Breaks,*" starring Marlon Brando and Jack Nicholson, is going to be the big movie of the year, he predicts. Location shooting has been going on in Virginia City and Billings since early July.

The biggest part of Mathews' job in Los Angeles is to get movie people to take a look at Montana. "Invariably, if they come up they like it, providing they have the kind of script that calls for the things we have."

One of the important factors in choosing a movie location is the cost of moving a large company from location to location. And while Montana's remoteness from Hollywood is an expensive drawback, it has the advantage that many different types of locations and facilities are readily accessible from a central spot, says Mathews. "We're not the only state that has that, mind you," he adds, "but it's a selling point."

During July Scott Warden, Coordinator of the Film Locations Division of the Montana Travel Promotion Unit, was working with Director Peter Schamoni of the West German production "*Potato Fritz.*" The film stars Hardy Kruger of "*Flight of the Phoenix.*" The movie is about early-day European immigrants and is being made for American as well as German and other viewers. Principle sites for the early-days movie will be Frontier Town and Gates of the Mountains.

Director Peter Schamoni shot test films at Frontier Town earlier this month.

Warden also announced that location photos have been sent to 20th Century Fox for a film titled Burnt Offerings and a scheduled production, Big Foot, and have also been sent to a New York agency for location of a Miller's beer commercial series.

Fiddlers Perform

"PICKLES" LEHMAN (R) and Bernie Rasmusson (L) of the MONTANA FIDDLERS entertained 300 photographers attending the national Press Photographers' Association convention at Jackson Lake, Wyo. June 25 when Montana made a bid for the association's 1977 convention. Rasmusson, of Polson, president of the 425-member fiddlers group, and Lehman, of Boulder, were invited to provide entertainment for the photo group by the Montana Travel Promotion Unit.

PREVIEW OF UPCOMING TRAVEL DEPARTMENT EVENTS

AUGUST —

9-13 — 35-plane Montana air tour by El Monte (Calif.) flying club.

10-14 — 7th annual meeting, National Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Bismarck, North Dakota.

17-20 — DATO International Pow Wow, Boston.

24 — Dedication of Libby Dam and International Recreation Area.

SEPTEMBER —

4-6 — PNTA Annual Conference, Boise.

5-8 — Travel agents familiarization tour.

OCTOBER —

9-11 — American Freedom Train in Billings for its only Montana appearance.

Red Sunday Premiere

120 Senators and Congressmen attended a Congressional Premiere July 15 of *Red Sunday*, documentary film dealing with the prelude events of the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

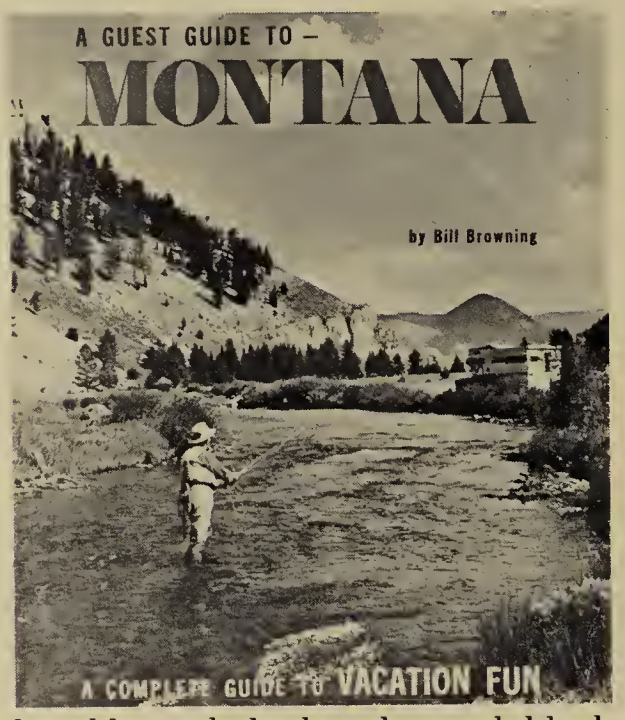
Invitations to the premiere were issued jointly by Senators Mike Mansfield and Lee Metcalf.

Red Sunday was sponsored by the Montana Travel Promotion Unit, North Dakota Travel Department, Montana Bicentennial Administration, and North Dakota Bicentennial Commission.

Guide Book Promotes Montana

A new guest guide promoting the travel attractions of Montana has been released by Montana Travel Hosts, the tourism division of the Montana Chamber of Commerce.

Titled "A Guest Guide to Montana," the guide is actually a comprehensive directory of the state's widely varied tourism attractions. Illustrated



lavishly with both color and black and white photographs, the book was initially issued in a 25,000 first printing for mailing distribution. A new printing is upcoming for distribution through the 1976 Bicentennial year.

The book's photography and layout were handled by Bill Browning, and initial costs were supported by sponsors including various local Chambers of Commerce, the First Bank System, Yellowstone Park Company, and the Montana Travel Promotion Unit. Cost of the book has been set at $2.95 per issue over the counter or $3.45 to have it mailed.

The travel book was initiated and published by Montana Travel Hosts and the Montana Chamber of Commerce.

Travel Increase

(Continued from Page 1)

travel interest, reported an eight percent increase with 63,450 visitors recorded through June, passing by a wide margin the 50,291 counted at the museum facility through June, 1974.

Representatives at various attractions indicated that the increase in travel is due in part to heightened interest in Bicentennial sites and events but attributed the most emphatic reason for the increase in travel to the fact that travelers have "got over the gas scare" and intend to travel despite rising gasoline costs.

Earlier this year travel experts had predicted a substantial increase in travel. At the 2nd Annual Governor's Conference on Travel held in Great Falls last April, William D. Toohey, President of the Discover America Travel Organization (DATO), told participants that "travel has become engrained in the American life style . . . Americans will continue to travel regardless of directions the national economy takes."

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